

RESOLUTION No. 15-662

WHEREAS, the City Council and the Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama are apprised that Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Holifield, Sr. will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Friday, September 11, 2015, at the Omega Center in Huntsville; and,

WHEREAS, Freeman Holifield, Sr. was born to the late Mr. and Mrs. Fred Holifield, Sr. of Bessemer, Alabama in Helena, Alabama. In August of 1959, after graduating from Dunbar High School in Bessemer Alabama, he joined the United States Army, where he served proudly as an Administrative Specialist. Upon receipt of his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Army in 1962, he continued his education at Alabama A&M University until he finished in 1966, obtaining his Bachelor of Science Degree in Secondary Education. In 1972, Holifield completed his Master's in Education Administration and Supervision. Carl Bailey, who was a classmate of Holifield, discussed the idea of desegregating the Huntsville Police Department, which led to the hiring of the late Carl Bailey, late Charles Huggins, late John Christmas, late John Staten, and Freeman Holifield in December 1963 and 1964. Later Holifield was promoted to the position of Traffic Officer in the elite Traffic Division (a first), and a few months later, as the first Black Motorcycle Officer. One of his proudest memories as a member of the Huntsville Police Department was to be a policeman on the day of the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts Bill; and,

WHEREAS, Janie Adams Holifield, the daughter of the late Clarence and the late Jennie M. Adams, was born in Leighton, Alabama. As one of eight children, she spent her formative years in Leighton where she received her early education, being taught in a white-framed, one-room church that also served as the school house in Colbert County, Alabama. During her teen years, her family moved to Sheffield, Alabama, where she attended Sterling High School and eventually graduated with honors. Upon graduating from Alabama A&M College in 1958 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in the field of Education, Mrs. Holifield was hired by the late Mr. Welton Reynolds as a First-Grade Teacher at W. C. Handy Elementary School in Florence, Alabama. Her first class was composed of fifty students. She spent nearly a decade at W. C. Handy School, only to leave and marry Freeman Holifield, Sr. in 1965, returning to Huntsville, Alabama. Mrs. Holifield's educational career has been filled with many "firsts", including being one of the first African-American principals at Elkmont Elementary School in Limestone County from 1967 to 1968. She was also one of the very first graduate students in the Master's Degree Program in Elementary Education established at the newly renamed Alabama A&M University. Another first was being among the first African American teachers to integrate the teaching ranks at Riverton Middle School in Madison County, Alabama. In 1977, Mrs. Holifield became the first African-American assistant principal at Gurley High School in Madison County, Alabama. As the assistant principal she also taught courses in mathematics, reading, and science, and was also the grade-level coordinator. Her teaching career spanned across the Atlantic to Germany; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Holifield have been happily married for the past 50 years. Miss Janie Adams married Freeman Holifield on Saturday, September 11, 1965. The minister, Reverend G. E. Nelson officiated. The bride's sister, Miss Gwendolyn Adams, was maid of honor. Bridesmaids were Miss Eloise Holifield, sister of the bridegroom, and Miss Kay Foster. Mrs. James C. Clay served as the matron of honor. John T. Staten served the bridegroom as best man. Ushers included Lock Beachum, James Clay, Ronald Hardy and James Williams. Following the ceremony, a reception was held at Michael Community Center; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Holifield have two children, a daughter, Dr. Quintaniay Holifield of Baltimore, Maryland, and a son, Lt. Colonel Freeman Holifield, Jr., who is married to Lorrie L. Holifield. They have one grandchild, Freeman Holifield, III.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, gratefully acknowledge, congratulate, and extend best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Holifield, Sr. in celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. May you have continued success in all future endeavors.

ADOPTED this the 10th day of September, 2015.

President of the City Council of
the City of Huntsville, Alabama

APPROVED this the 10th day of September, 2015.

Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama